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Submitted by Joan Nichols, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

Testimony in support of: HB 5125: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO LIVESTOCK PROCESSING FACILITIES IN THE STATE.

Connecticut Farm Bureau Association (CFBA) is a non-profit membership organization representing nearly 2,500 farming families in the state of Connecticut.

Senator Hartley, Representative Currey, Senator Martin, Representative Buckbee, and members of the Commerce Committee.

There is an acute shortage of meat and poultry processing facilities in the state of Connecticut. Our livestock producers must transport animals across state lines, sometimes as far as New York or Vermont, to have their animals processed under USDA inspection. Our farmers then must travel back to those facilities to pick up the processed and wrapped products and then transport those meat products either back to their retail farm store or to their customer's location.

In addition, producers must make appointments months, sometimes a year in advance, to be sure the animals will be processed at the appropriate time to fill customer's orders. This is lost time on the farm and increased fuel and handling costs all of which is ultimately passed on to the consumer in terms of higher food costs.

Connecticut Farm Bureau Association welcomes the opportunity to work with the Department of Economic and Community Development in their economic development study to address issues and explore solutions regarding livestock processing in the state. We are readily available to help facilitate meetings with our livestock producers and to support future initiatives, funding, and potential legislation to address this important issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. I may be reached for further discussion at joann@cfba.org (850) 951-2791.